

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of providing a virtual common reading feature for two or more networked hard disk recorders, said method comprising the steps of:
  - receiving a request to view content on a first hard disk recorder;
  - determining the requested content resides on a second hard disk recorder;
  - decrypting the requested content via a local encryption scheme; and
  - displaying the requested content on a display device coupled to the first hard disk recorder.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein displaying the requested content on a display device coupled to the first hard disk recorder comprises storing the requested content within a memory located within the first hard disk recorder.
3. The method of Claim 1, wherein displaying the requested content on a display device coupled to the first hard disk recorder comprises remotely accessing the requested content on the first hard disk recorder.

4. A method of providing a virtual common writing feature to two or more networked hard disk recorders said method comprising the steps of:

receiving content on a first hard disk recorder from a content source;  
decrypting the content;  
re-encrypting the content utilizing a local encryption scheme; and  
storing the content in a shared memory.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein decrypting the content comprises decrypting the content utilizing decryption keys received from the content source.

6. The method of Claim 4, wherein storing the content in a shared memory comprises storing the content in a shared memory located within the first hard disk recorder.

7. The method of Claim 4, wherein storing the content in a shared memory comprises storing the content in a shared memory located within a second hard disk recorder.

8. An apparatus providing shared tuning resources between two or more hard disk recorders, said apparatus comprising:

    a network of hard disk recorders, said network of hard disk recorders comprising:

        a first hard disk recorder, said first hard disk recorder comprising one or more tuners; and

        a second hard disk recorder, said second hard disk recorder comprising one or more tuners;

    a communication gateway coupling the first hard disk recorder to the second hard disk recorder;

    an input from a content source; and

    a program module, said program module containing instructions operative to:

        determine the location of requested content on the network of hard disk recorders;

        allocate tuning resources requested by a first hard disk recorder on the network of hard disk recorders;

        allocate encryption resources requested by a first hard disk recorder on the network of hard disk recorders; and

        allocate decryption resources requested by a first hard disk recorder on the network of hard disk recorders.

9. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein said network of hard disk recorders comprises a plurality of hard disk recorders.